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H.P.B.

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): Taggart
Serial No. : 09/376,992
Filing Date: 05/31/00

Examiner: Douglas, S.
Art Unit: 3751
Dkt. No.: STEU-2662

Title: **Apparatus and Method for Providing Container Filling in an Aseptic Processing Apparatus**

Assistant Commissioner For Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Amendment

Sir:

In response to the Office Action of May, 31, 2000, please amend the above-referenced patent application as follows:

In the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

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SEP 14 2000
TC 3700 MAIL ROOM

1. (Amended) Apparatus comprising:

a valve for controlling a flow of product;

a first sterile region surrounding a region where the product exits the valve;

a continuously sterilized second sterile region positioned proximate said first sterile region whereby said second sterile region is continuously sterilized during operation;

a valve activation mechanism for controlling the opening or closing of the valve by extending a portion of the valve from the continuously sterilized second sterile region into

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